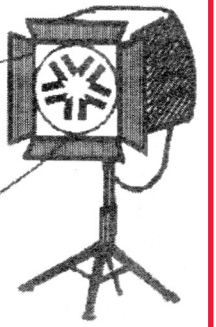




DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OFFICE ON AGING

Spotlight On Aging



VOLUME XXI, ISSUE 2

A newsletter for D.C. Seniors

February 2006

Celebrating Older Washingtonians and 30 years of the Office on Aging

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



By E. Veronica Pace

Happy Heart Month! February reminds us to love one another and to love ourselves by taking care of our hearts. Today, heart disease is the number one killer of women in America. To focus attention on

the risk for heart disease for women, February 3 has been designated National Wear Red for Women Day.

A mission-driven agency, the Office on Aging works in partnership with older adults and community-based agencies to provide wellness programs and services that promote healthy lifestyles, habits and healthy hearts.

In our Report to the People (part 2), we list partners in service and the level of funding that was awarded to each partner in fiscal year 2005 to support aging-related programs and services. Your tax dollars are working for good health outcomes.

Speaking of taxes, if you are a homeowner and you are at least 65 years of age, property tax relief may be available beginning in March of this year. Read about it in this month's issue.

Medicare Prescription Drug Coverage help is available for people with Medicare and limited financial resources. A new program, My Medicare Matters, will be hosting educational events at a location near you. If your organization, program, housing development or civic group would like to schedule a session, call 800-890-6444.

The mobile van, equipped with technology and counselors to help you review and select the coverage suited to your needs, is ready to roll out to your event.

Celebrations are good for the heart and spirit. We hope you enjoy our photo gallery featuring guests at the 8th Annual Holiday Celebration. This special event provided an opportunity for socialization, stimulation, education and advocacy in keeping with the mission of the Office on Aging. Our heart belongs to you!

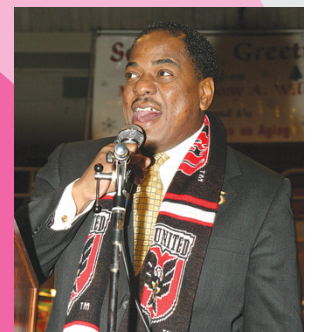
Happy Valentine's Day!



Mayor Anthony A. Williams



Commission on Aging

Councilmember
Vincent OrangeThe mayor's mother Virginia E. Hayes
Williams and Office on Aging
Executive Director E. Veronica PaceCouncilmember
Adrian Fenty

*Partners
in Service*

Councilmember Vincent Gray, members of the D.C. Senior
America Cameo Club and Ms. Senior D.C. Sandra Bears

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

ANTHONY A. WILLIAMS, MAYOR

Our Partners in Service

Office on Aging Report to the People – Part 2

Funding for Senior Service Network during Fiscal Year 2005

September 30, 2004 - October 1, 2005

Lead Agencies (Serves as a coordinating link to social and supportive services as well as information and assistance.) Barney Neighborhood House, Wards 1 and 4\$764,000.00 IONA Senior Services, Ward 3 ...\$719,100.00 Greater Washington Urban League, Wards 2, 5, and 8\$1,715,478.00 United Planning Organization/ Senior Services, Ward 6\$525,000.00 United Planning Organization/ Project KEEN, Ward 7\$809,600.00 Non-Lead Agencies - Additional Programs and Services Alzheimer's Association\$94,450.00 Center Care at the Washington Center for Aging Services\$465,000.00 Christian Communities Group Homes\$91,800.00 Department of Parks and Recreation\$153,000.00 Downtown Cluster's Geriatric Day Care\$298,600.00	 Educational Organization for United Latin Americans (EOFULA)\$234,600.00 Emmaus\$66,300.00 Family and Child Services/ Columbia Senior Services\$964,190.00 Family and Child Services/ Golden Washingtonians\$217,600.00 Family and Child Services/ Model Cities\$336,166.00 Family and Child Services/ Senior Works\$127,500.00 Family and Child Services/ Weekend Alzheimer's Program\$51,000. First Baptist Senior Center\$203,200.00 Food Service Contract\$5,200,000.00 Georgetown University/ Client Information System\$200,000.00 GW/Assessment/ Case Management\$153,000.00 GW/Health Insurance Counseling Program\$141,811.00 Greater Washington Urban League Hearing Impaired Program\$102,000.00 Homecare Partners -Homemaker\$2,383,874.00	 Howard University Senior Service Network Training\$61,200.00 Legal Counsel for the Elderly\$557,100.00 Providence Health Foundation - Congress Heights Senior Wellness Center\$336,166.00 So Others Might Eat - Senior Centers\$147,900.00 Caregivers\$40,700.00 Dwelling Place Shelter for Abused Elderly\$168,800.00 United Planning Organization/ Washington and Elderly Handicapped Transportation Service (WEHTS) and Call 'N' Ride\$2,340,100.00 University of the District of Columbia\$215,000.00 United Planning Organization/ Seniors Wellness Center Ward 7\$358,166.00 United Planning Organization/ Weekend Nutrition\$51,000.00 Zion Baptist Church/ Genevieve N. Johnson Adult Day Care Program\$140,000.00
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February is Healthy Heart Month

10 Ways to Take Charge of Your Heart Health

1. Schedule a yearly check-up.

Each year on your birthday, schedule a check-up to have your blood pressure, cholesterol and glucose levels checked, and ask your doctor to help you reach or maintain a healthy weight. Be sure to follow your healthcare professional's recommendations, including taking prescribed medications.

2. Get physical.

Step, march or jog in place for at least 15 minutes a day while watching your favorite TV shows. Increase your activity by five minutes each week until you're getting a minimum of 30 minutes most days of the week. If exercise and diet do not get you to your goal, ask your doctor about adding medication.

3. Drink more water.

Take a water bottle with you wherever you go. It'll keep you hydrated, and the bottle's weight will strengthen your arms.

4. Eat healthy.

Keep packages of unhealthy food hidden. Put raw veg-

gies and fruits in front in the refrigerator and healthy snacks in the front of the pantry, so that's what you see first. If you keep grabbing healthy foods for a minimum of 21 times, it will become a habit.

5. Control cholesterol.

Eating foods high in saturated fat can lead to high cholesterol. To help keep your cholesterol levels down, eat foods low in saturated fat, such as lean chicken or turkey (roasted or baked, with skin removed), fruits and veggies, low-fat or fat-free dairy products and whole grains. Look for American Heart Association cookbooks in your local bookstore for healthy and delicious recipes.

6. Cut down on salt.

To help lower high blood pressure, watch your salt intake. Salt may be disguised in food labels as sodium alginate, sodium sulfite, sodium caseinate, disodium phosphate, sodium benzoate, sodium hydroxide, monosodium glutamate (MSG) and sodium citrate.

7. Quit smoking.

Try this four-step way to kick your habit. On Day 1, cut

the number of cigarettes you smoke by half; on Day 3, cut the number of cigarettes you smoke in half again; and on Day 5, cut your smoking in half again. On your Quit Day, quit!

8. Maintain a healthy weight.

Excess weight increases your risk of heart disease, stroke and diabetes. To achieve steady, painless weight loss, take it easy. Each day, if you eat 200-300 calories less than you would normally consume, and exercise at least 30 minutes on most or all days of the week, you'll get closer to your goal and be able to achieve weight loss that's steady and painless.

9. Stay positive.

If you get off your exercise schedule, have a cigarette or eat a fattening meal, immediately get back on track toward re-establishing a healthy lifestyle.

10. Give yourself credit

To maintain momentum with exercising, losing weight or quitting smoking, keep track of your achievements and reward yourself by doing something you enjoy.

D.C. OFFICE ON AGING NEWSLETTER

Community Calendar

February events

2nd • 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

"My Medicare Matters" program offers in-person help with your Medicare benefit questions at First Baptist Senior Center, 715 Randolph Street, N.W. Bring your current drug coverage and Medicare ID cards, your pharmacy preference, and a list of medications you take with you. For more information, call 202-723-4313.

3rd • noon

Join in "Red Dress Day," and celebrate quality of life at Washington Seniors Wellness Center, temporarily at Hillcrest Recreation Center, 3030 Denver St., S.E. Play bingo and enjoy tea. For more information, call 202-581-9355.

6th, 13th, 27th • 11:30 a.m.

Join in an African dance class held for three consecutive Mondays. The class is sponsored by the Washington Seniors Wellness Center, temporarily at Hillcrest Recreation Center, 3030 Denver St., S.E. For more information, call 202-581-9355.

6th, 8th, 9th, 13th, 21st & 27th • 11 a.m. to noon

In honor of Black History Month, United Planning Organization's Project KEEN will lead a series titled "Go Tell It" relating family stories. Seniors are encouraged to share personal accounts through song, photographs and dialogue. The events will take place on the following dates at the Phillip T. Johnson Senior Center, 3200 S. St, S.E.: February 6, 8, 9, 13, 21 and 27. For more information, call Robynette Livingston at 202-584-4431.

7th • 2:30-3:30 p.m.

IONA nutritionist Linda Smith will lead a seminar titled "Maximizing Your Mood/Mental Power through Diet." It will meet at 4125 Albemarle St., N.W. To register, call 202-966-1055.

10th • 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Come to the Greater Washington Urban League's Division of Aging & Health Services' annual senior Valentine's party. It will be at Teamster Union Hall, 3100 Ames Pl., N.E. Contact Vivian Grayton for reservations at 202-529-8701.

17th • 11 a.m.

Washington Wellness Center members will see the Serenity Players performance of *Harriet*, an award-winning one-act dramatization of the life of Harriet Tubman. The performance will be held at the THEARC Theatre, 1901 Mississippi Ave., S.E. Admission is \$10. To reserve a bus seat, contact Vanessa Williams-Harvin at 202-581-9355.

22nd • 11 a.m.

Come to an IONA Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit question and answer session. It will be at the Metropolitan Memorial United Methodist Church, 3401 Nebraska Ave., N.W. For details, call 202-966-1055.

23rd • 11:30 a.m.

The general public is invited to a presentation by the Washington Seniors Wellness Center titled "Aging vs. Dementia." The presentation will be held at Hillcrest Recreation Center, 3030 Denver St., S.E. For more information, call 202-581-9355.

28th • 11 a.m.

Attend a seminar on consumer education for sen-

iors at the Knox Hill Senior Nutrition Center, 2700 Jasper St, S.E. The seminar is sponsored by the Greater Washington Urban League, Division of Aging & Health Services. For more information, call Vivian Grayton at 202-529-8701.

28th • 2:30-3:30 p.m.

Learn important tips for healthy and effective weight loss from IONA's nutritionist Linda Smith. She will discuss topics of health at her "Weight Control Kick OFF!" To register, call 202-966-1055.

Ongoing

Throughout February, the Greater Washington Urban League will host black history programs. Call Vivian Grayton at 202-529-8701 for dates and times.

Barney Neighborhood House Senior Program is sponsoring a series of health-related screenings in February in conjunction with Howard University. Clinics will deal with sight and hearing. Call Ms. Ellis at 202-939-9020 for dates and times.

IONA offers assistance to explain Medicare prescription drug plans. You can request a Medicare drug benefit toolkit by calling 202-895-9448. The toolkit provides important information about Medicare Part D, and lists what to bring if you decide to meet with an IONA volunteer counselor. To make an appointment with a counselor, call 202-966-1055.

Wednesdays

Join the Washington Senior Wellness Center for a crochet class at 11:30 a.m. and a yoga class at 2:30 p.m. every Wednesday. The classes are held at Hillcrest Recreation Center, 3030 Denver St., S.E. For more information, call 202-581-9355.

Property Tax Deferral Available to Homeowners Age 65+

As District property tax assessments skyrocket, many seniors who live on fixed incomes have trouble keeping up with their rising taxes.

To address that issue, the District Council included meaningful property tax relief for seniors when they passed the Budget Support Act in 2005.

The tax measure, which was proposed by AARP D.C. and the AARP Legal Counsel for the Elderly, allows residents age 65 and older with annual household incomes of less than \$50,000 to delay paying annual property taxes until they sell or transfer their homes. It will go into effect in March 2006.

Originally introduced as the stand-alone Senior Citizen Real Property Tax Deferral Act by Council Members Jack Evans (D) and Carol Schwartz (R), the provision was supported by all 13 council members.

The measure will help low- to moderate-income older homeowners who want to stay in their homes, but cannot afford the rising property taxes. "Our goal for this measure is to make sure that people aren't forced out of their homes because of their tax bills," said Romaine Thomas, president of AARP D.C.

Such displacement was a real and frightening pos-

sibility for Ward 1 resident Catherine Hill, who testified on behalf of the legislation in March.

"Like many seniors, I have limited finances. My only source of income is monthly Social Security benefits. That's why I got behind on property taxes and had a lawsuit filed against me to take away my legal right to my home," she said.

"I learned that in order to keep ownership, I would have to pay delinquent taxes plus 18 percent interest, attorney fees of more than \$2,000, court costs, publication fees and more. The outstanding real property taxes were only \$1,165.35, but before I could redeem my home, I would have to pay about \$3,500."

If it were not for the assistance of the AARP Legal Counsel for the Elderly, Hill doesn't know how she would have been able to work out a reasonable settlement and keep her home.

Many others have not been so lucky. And with residential assessments projected to rise by 15 to 18 percent in 2005, the need for relief is only increasing. The tax deferral language included in the Budget Support Act provides that relief - and peace of mind.

The AARP-endorsed tax deferral measure will as-

sist the District's low- to moderate-income senior homeowners without causing a permanent revenue loss to the District. The deferred taxes will ultimately be paid, with interest, when the property is transferred.

For more information or to learn how to apply, contact the AARP Legal Counsel for the Elderly at 202-434-2120.

SPOTLIGHT ON AGING

Spotlight On Aging is published by the Information Office of the D.C. Office on Aging for D.C. senior residents.

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Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination which is prohibited by the Act. In addition, harassment based on any of the above protected categories is prohibited by the Act. Discrimination in violation of the Act will not be tolerated. Violators will be subjected to disciplinary action.

The Office on Aging is in partnership with the District of Columbia Recycling Program.

D.C. OFFICE ON AGING NEWSLETTER



Seniors benefiting from reflexology and massages



Seniors benefiting from dance



Seniors benefiting from manicures



Seniors benefiting from exercise



Seniors benefiting from vision screenings



Seniors benefiting from dance

*Benefiting
from Service*